

Permitting Mobile Units (aka Food Trucks)

Contact your local municipal government office about regulations regarding:

1. Requirements for a business license and taxes.
2. Location(s) where you may set up for business. Residential areas are generally restricted.

Please provide us with the name(s) of whom you spoke or paperwork to allow us to verify this information.

Obtain a *Food Establishment Permit Application* and a *Plan Review form* from one of our offices.

Mobile Units must meet the following conditions:

- Current **VDOT** (Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) **permit**.
- **Self-sufficient and self-contained**. Consider power and water needs. Tanks must be attached to the unit.
- **Potable (fresh) water tank**: Water must come from an approved source such as a public water source or bottled water. Well water and spring water are not generally considered an approved source. A **food grade hose** is required to permit easy filling of the water tank.
 - Include a **letter of approval for the water source**
- **Water heater**: hot water must reach at least 100°F.
- **Waste water tank**: installed on unit and at least 15% greater in capacity than the fresh water tank. VDH regulations prohibit “Pump and Haul” situations: waste water may **not** be transferred by Mobile Unit operators from one tank to another. Provide a **hose** for easy emptying of the waste water tank; this hose will differ in size from the potable water hose. Dump stations include most campgrounds, RV service centers, and municipal water treatment plants. Alternately, Permitted Sewage Transport Vehicles may be contracted with or hired to empty waste water tanks. Include a letter of approval from the facility (primary *waste water dump station or provider*) or Permitted Sewage Transport Vehicle.
- **Hand sink**: hot and cold running water under pressure.
- **Ware wash (3-compartment) sink**: This sink is used for washing, rinsing, and sanitizing pots, pans, utensils, and other food contact equipment. Also requires hot and cold running water under pressure.
- **Dish drying area**: may be part of or separate from (but in close in proximity to) the 3-bay sink.
- **Walls, ceilings, floors and work surfaces**: smooth, easily cleanable, non-porous and impermeable to moisture.
- **Shielded lights**: to protect food from potential glass breakage. Coated bulbs are acceptable.
- **Doors and windows**: designed to minimize entry by insects and other pests. Doors should be self-closing and fit snugly. Screens should be small enough in gauge to prevent entry of flies. Sliding service windows and screens are recommended as they can be closed when not in service.
- A **restroom** must be available for food handlers during all times of operation and food preparation.

Submit the Application, Plan Review, fees, approval letters and the information listed below to your Local Health Department (LHD):

- List the size (in gallons) of the potable water and waste water tanks; include letter(s) of permission.
- **Scaled drawing** of the unit. Identify the scale (example: ¼ inch = 1 foot) or label overall dimensions. Label all major equipment, including tanks, sinks, refrigerators, freezers, cooking & holding equipment.
- **Finishing Schedule**: a list of materials used to “finish” floors, walls and ceilings.
- **Menu** of the items you plan to offer.
- A Commissary may be used for storage of food and supplies, and for ware washing limited items (large pots, for example). A VDH or Virginia Dept. of Agriculture (VDACS) facility may serve as a Commissary. Please provide a signed letter of permission from the facility manager.

Allow us 10 working days to provide a Plan Review Response. We will schedule and conduct a **Pre-Opening Inspection**. We will issue a Mobile Unit Permit when the mobile unit and equipment meet VDH regulations.

Operating and Public Events: A Mobile Unit Permit (or sticker) allows operation in most (but NOT all) Virginia localities if you comply with local zoning regulations and obtain permission from the property owner. Please check with the LHD Environmental Health office before operating in a new location. Most Virginia LHDs do not require additional fees from VDH Permitted Mobile Unit when participating in Public Events. When applying to Event organizers it is helpful if you include a copy of your permit with your application.